

. CME Overview

The University of Mississippi will establish a Center for Manufacturing Excellence (“CME”) associated with the building of a new Toyota manufacturing plant near Blue Springs, MS. The Center for Manufacturing Excellence will be a first for the State of Mississippi and will be unique in the nation in its offerings to undergraduate students.

As a component of the CME, the University of Mississippi will offer an emphasis program of instruction in manufacturing, slanted toward lean manufacturing but applicable to all Mississippi manufacturing industries. The School of Engineering plans to offer a bachelors degree in mechanical engineering with an emphasis in manufacturing. This degree program will provide opportunities for students to be immersed in strong cross-disciplinary studies that reflect the skills needed in engineering and the sciences; business, management and accounting; and leadership and human resources. The School of Business Administration and the School of Accountancy will also offer a minor in engineering, through the School of Engineering, that will provide students with fundamental lean manufacturing and production techniques.

In addition, the Center will serve as a resource center for:

- manufacturing related research support and collaboration,
- industrial extension services to train the Mississippi manufacturing community in modern manufacturing philosophies,
- executive-in-residence and visiting faculty fellowship programs, and
- P-20 Collaboration with K-12 schools and local community colleges.

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University of Mississippi

1,700-acre site in Blue Springs, Mississippi to build its eighth North American vehicle assembly plant.

The new plant, to be located just outside of Tupelo, will have the capacity to build 150,000 vehicles annually of Toyota’s popular Highlander sport utility vehicle. Production is scheduled to begin by 2010.

The new plant represents a \$1.3 billion investment by Toyota and is expected to create approximately 2,000 new jobs for the region and indirectly create work for many more. Operations at the plant will include stamping, body weld, plastics, paint, and assembly.

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OXFORD, Miss. – A new partnership at the University of Mississippi aims to keep jobs at home by educating the nation’s future manufacturing professionals.

The university, the state of Mississippi and Toyota Motor Corporation are joining together to create the Center for Manufacturing Excellence, the first of its kind in the country.

The center grew out of legislation related to Toyota's \$1.3 billion plant in Blue Springs, Miss., where an estimated 2,000 employees will build the popular sport utility vehicle. Production is scheduled to begin by mid-2010.

Enabling Legislation, is to work closely with the state's manufacturing firms to improve their competitiveness.

"This center will be a perfect blend of academic and real-world focus so essential today for success in the multi-faceted global manufacturing sector. My expectation is that students who go through this intensive program will become industry leaders

"The Center for Manufacturing Excellence will be a genuinely unique institution that generates engineering graduates who understand advanced manufacturing from a process/engineering perspective and from the business, management and leadership points of view," said James Vaughan, Frederick A. P. Barnard Distinguished Professor of Mechanical Engineering and associate dean of the School of Engineering.

The CME is thought to be the only one of its kind, said Dennis Cuneo, a former Toyota senior vice president and current Toyota consultant who led the team that selected the Blue Springs site.

"It will help enhance and further manufacturing excellence in Mississippi and beyond," Cuneo said. "Automotive and non-automotive companies will benefit from the

center. I salute Governor Barbour and Chancellor Khayat for taking such a positive step to help manufacturing thrive.”

Cuneo said the plant to be located at Blue Springs is a \$1.3 billion investment that will create approximately 2,000 jobs. The \$30 million center is being funded through a portion of the state incentive package that lured Toyota to the area.

“We are happy to see the state so committed to advancing manufacturing,” Cuneo said. “Some people assume that the manufacturing sector is in decline and is destined to move offshore. The creation of the center shows that the manufacturing sector is vibrant and growing in Mississippi and will play an important role in the state’s economy.”

INSERT Governor’s Office QUOTE HERE (Specifically, why is the state supporting this project so strongly? How will the plant, Center benefit the state and its residents?)

A major goal of the center is to produce and connect a continuous pool of highly-qualified graduates likely to be hired by manufacturers as engineers, accountants, business managers and other professionals.

One floor of the planned 47,000-square-foot center is to house a small factory floor complete with different process lines, Vaughan said. In addition to classrooms, laboratories and student workspaces, the building also is to have office space for the center’s six new faculty members, as well as room for visiting faculty and the visiting Toyota executive-in-residence.

As a component of the center, the university is developing an emphasis program of instruction in manufacturing, slanted toward lean manufacturing applicable to all

Mississippi manufacturing industries. The School of Engineering plans to offer a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering with an emphasis in manufacturing.

The new CME programs will provide opportunities for students to be immersed in strong cross-disciplinary studies that reflect the skills needed in engineering and the sciences, business, management, accounting, leadership and human resources. The School of Business Administration and the School of Accountancy plan to offer a minor in engineering, through the School of Engineering, to provide students with fundamental lean manufacturing and production techniques.

In addition to expanded academic opportunities, the CME students are to participate in an internship or co-op work study program to gain hands-on industrial experience.

“By the beginning of their junior year, our students will be heavily involved in responding to real manufacturing design problems,” Vaughan said. “By the end of their senior year, they should have mastered all of the skills which would make them attractive to industry both inside and outside of Mississippi.”

Though definite plans have not been finalized, the program could begin enrolling students as early as the fall of 2009, Vaughan said. Current students and students who enroll this fall also will benefit from the CME.

Other goals of the center are to serve as a resource center for research and programs related to manufacturing, to train the state's manufacturing community and to collaborate with local K-12 schools and local community colleges.

“At the University of Mississippi, we understand that for our students to succeed in the ultra-competitive global economy, we must be deliberate about developing and

aligning resources,” UM Interim Provost Morris Stocks said. “The Center for Manufacturing Excellence is a wonderful example of coordinating the resources of the university, the state and the manufacturing industry in order to brighten the economic and academic future of our extended community.”

For more information, visit <http://www.olemiss.edu>.
(jennifer farish and edwin smith)

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